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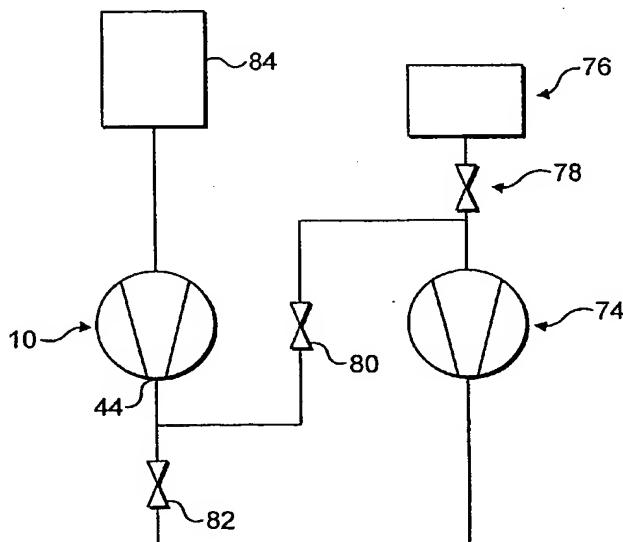
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(54) Title: **VACUUM PUMPING SYSTEM AND METHOD OF OPERATING A VACUUM PUMPING ARRANGEMENT**



(57) Abstract: A vacuum pumping system comprises a vacuum pumping arrangement comprising: a drive shaft; a motor for driving said drive shaft; a molecular pumping mechanism comprising turbomolecular pumping means; and a backing pumping mechanism. The drive shaft drives said molecular pumping mechanism and said backing pumping mechanism. The system also comprises evacuation means, such as a load lock pump, for evacuating at least, said turbomolecular pumping means.